**Research Prospectus with Tentative Abstract and Annotated Bibliography: Assignment Description**

In the proposal for your research paper, you must identify the **text** you will be discussing and provide a **draft thesis statement** for your paper. You must also describe the **central questions and themes** that you will discuss in your paper, as well as identify **two textual examples** that you consider important to your project. You must briefly summarize the paper as you are (provisionally) envisioning it. Be as specific as possible, but remember that you can change the direction of your paper later.

Make sure that your proposal is in paragraph form and that your thesis is an **argument** and *not* an observation or plot summary of the text. Indicate which sentence is your thesis by writing it in bold and underlined font.

**In addition to this proposal**, you must also provide **an annotated list of at least 3 sources** that you may cite in your paper. Your citations must be in MLA style, and each annotation should be a **minimum** of **3 sentences**. Your annotation should summarize the source and also explain how you might use it in your paper. Your sources may pertain to your chosen text, author, historical or cultural period, or a particular kind of literary theory (e.g. gender studies, psychoanalysis, etc.).

This assignment is worth **10%** of your final grade in the course.

**Required Elements**

* **500 words minimum** (this **does not include** your paper heading or your annotated citations), in paragraph style.
  + Papers that are under the minimum word count will face a significant grade penalty
* **Content** – use this as an assignment checklist
  + Text choice
  + Working paper title
  + Working thesis statement (indicated in bold and underlined)
  + Central questions and themes you will be addressing
  + 2 textual examples you plan to discuss (you will have numerous examples in your paper)
  + 3 source citations (at least) with annotations
* Due electronically by **5 P.M.** on **Friday, October 11**
  + Submit your prospectus in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format on ELearning
* **File Name:** Save your files as “Last name”, “Assignment Name,” e.g. Krafft, Response Paper 1, in .doc or .docx format.
* **MLA Format** 
  + Double-spaced (including heading)
  + 12 point, Times New Roman font
  + 1 inch margins, on all sides
  + Italicize book titles, put the titles of short stories in quotation marks
* **Paper Heading**: In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, provide this heading:

Your name (first and last)

Ms. Krafft

AML 2410, Section 8974

Assignment Date

**On MLA Style**

* Here are a couple of basic citations you should know – we will review this information in class
  + **Book citation**: Last name, First name. Title of Book. City of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.
  + **Article from an online database**: Last name, First name. “Article title.” *Journal title* Volume number.Issue number: Page range. *Database name*. Web. Date of access.
* For more about MLA style, see Janet E. Gardner. *Writing About Literature With 2009 MLA Update: A Portable Guide* and <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/1/>

**Annotated Citation Example**

Bergson, Henri. *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic*. 1900. Trans. Fred Rothwell.

New York: Macmillan, 1914. Print. Bergson characterizes laughter as the action of the group, and the comic butt as an individual in need of correction. While he does not consider components like race and gender, his model of humor as in-group versus out-group is useful for thinking of confrontational styles of laughter.

**Important Deadlines**

* **Thursday, October 10**: In-class peer review
  + Bring a **complete** draft of your research prospectus and annotated bibliography to class (2 copies)
* **Friday, October 11:** Final paper prospectus and annotated bibliography due by **5:00 PM**
  + Submit your assignment electronically on E-Learning

**Text Choices**

You may write about any text from the entirety of the course. This includes:

* Washington Irving, “The Wife”
* Sarah Wentworth Apthorp Morton, “Stanzas to a Husband Recently United”
* Edgar Allan Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “The Haunted Palace”
* Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper”, “Why I Wrote ‘The Yellow Wallpaper’”, and “Turned”
* Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth*
* Edna St. Vincent Millay, “I Think I Should Have Loved You Presently”and “I, Being Born a Woman and Distressed”
* Dorothy Parker, “Big Blonde”
* Claude McKay, “The Harlem Dancer” and “Harlem Shadows”
* Jean Toomer, “Karintha,” “Becky,” and “Blood-Burning Moon”
* Zora Neale Hurston, “Sweat”
* William Faulkner, “Barn Burning”
* Ernest Hemingway, selections from *In Our Time*
* Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman*
* Carson McCullers, “A Domestic Dilemma” and “The Haunted Boy”
* Sylvia Plath, selected poems
* Toni Morrison, *Beloved*
* Don DeLillo, *White Noise*
* Robert Kirkman and Tony Moore, *The Walking Dead, Volume 1: Days Gone Bye*

**Some Things To Remember**

* All of your secondary sources must be scholarly and reputable – this means no Wikipedia, no Sparknotes, etc.
* You must have a strong **thesis statement**
  + Always answer the central question of *why* an author would write in his or her particular style, about a particular subject, etc.
* Remember that your classmates will be researching the same books and stories, so please be courteous in your use of library materials (try to use things on location or return items promptly to the library)
* Outline or organize your prospectus before you write it, especially since this assignment is linked into the longer paper.
* I have office hours for a reason: if you are concerned about the paper, talk to me before it’s due.

**Advice for Getting Started / Pre-Writing**

* Text Choice: Pick a text that you enjoyed reading or found interesting, since you will be spending a good deal of time with it over the next few weeks.
* Pre-Analysis Notes: Re-read the text and take detailed notes. Write down everything that seems important to you, and keep track of page numbers with specific examples and quotations.
* Analyze the Text: Consider the starting questions for topics and consider the theme or issue that you will write about. Locate examples that support your argument about this theme.

**About Paper Grades**

See our class syllabus for a reminder of how I will grade your assignments.

In each paper, I will be looking at:

* Content: How strong is your argument, development, and support?
* Organization: How well-structured are your paragraphs? Do your overall ideas flow well?
* Mechanics: How frequently do you make errors in grammar, style, and spelling?

Content and organization are the most important areas to focus on.

**Originality Requirement**

You can expand on themes that you discussed in a response paper or class presentation, but you **may** **not** repeat language from a response paper (no copying and pasting).

Likewise, you cannot re-use material that you have written for other classes.

* Plagiarism is defined as quoting sources (published or unpublished) without proper attribution
  + Always cite page numbers, even when you are summarizing material
* Plagiarism also occurs when you borrow someone else’s *ideas* and pass them off as your own
* Don’t do it - you will fail the assignment if you plagiarize, and potentially fail the class as well

**Lateness Policy**

I will reduce the assignment grade by 10% for each day that it is late. I will deduct an addition 10% for every additional day the assignment is late, including weekends.